

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-13

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SY-10 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20

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FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 449

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

S E C R E T COLOMBO 241

SNEO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, CE

SUBJ: ALLEGATIONS OF COUP PLOTTING

REF: COLOMBO 130

1. SRI LANKA OPPOSITION LEADER 'R. JAYEWARDENE'S ACCUSATIONS OF LEFTIST PLOTTING AGAINST MRS BANDARFVAIKE (REFTEL) DOMINATED NEWSPAPERS HERE DURING PAST WEEK. PROCEDURAL WRANGLE HAS DEVELOPED BETWEEN JAYEWARDENE AND PRIME MINISTER OVER HOW TO INVESTIGATE CHARGES. J.ROB HAS TOLD PRIME MINISTER IN SEVERL LETTER AND PRESS STATEMENTS DURING PAST FEW DAYS THAT HE WILL RELEASE EVIDENCE ONLY TO SELECT COMMITTEE OF NATIONAL STATE ASSEMBLY AND NOT TO POLICE, APPARENTLY TO PROTECT HIS INFORMANT AND TO AVOID LIBEL CHARGES. THIS DEMAND HAS BEEN VIGOROUSLY RESISTED BY MRS BANDARANAIKE, WHO SUGGESTED POLICE INVESTIGATION JOINTLY SUPERVISED BY J.R. AND ONE OF HER MINISTERS TO DETERMINE WHETHER CAUSE FOR FURTHER ACTION EXISTS. PRIMIN SAYS SHE QUESTIONS JAYEWARDENE'S VERACITY BECAUSE OF UN-SUBSTANTIATED CHARGES HE MADE ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS IN EARLIER YEARS.

2. UNITED NATIONAL PARTY (UNP) SOURCES CLAIM THAT EARLIER
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TALK OF "COUP" IS MISNOMER AND THAT J.R. ACTUALLY MEANT

"INFILTRATION" OF UNITED FRONT GOVT (UFG) BY EXTREMISTS (JANAVEGAYA GROUP) WITH "SEIZURE OF POWER" IN MIND. THESE SOURCES PREDICT JAYEWARDENE WILL REVEAL FURTHER DETAILS OF UNSPECIFIED WRONGDOING TO KEEP ISSUE ALIVE AND THEY SAY HE IS SATISFIED THAT HE IS ALERTING COUNTRY TO READL DESIGNS OF ULTRA-LZVT. SEVERAL BUNP SOURCES HAVE TOLD US THAT IN FRAMING THESE CHARGES J.R. HAS BEEN IN LIAISON WITH MAITHRIPALAR SENANAYAKE, A LEADER OF RIGHT-WING IN PRIME MINISTERS SRI LANKA FREEDOM PARTY WHO IS SAID TO BE EQUALLY FEARFUL OF JANAVEGAYA GROUPS INFLUENCE.

3. COMMENT: WHILE THESE SUBTLETIES MAY SATISFY PARTY LOYALISTS, WHO ONLY NOW ARE BEING INFORMED OF J.R.'S STRATEGY, PUBLIC OPINION REMAINS SOMEWHAT PUZZLED AND CONFUSED BY JAYEWARDENES TACTICS. LEFT-WING OF URG MAY BE EQUALLY PUZZLED AS TO J.R.'S OBJECTIVES. PRIME MINISTERS DAUGHTER, SUNZLHRA RUPASINGHE, WHOSE HUSBAND EDITS JANAVEGAYA NEZBPAPER, APPROACHED LBDG-TIME USIS CEYLONESE EMPLOYEE FOR ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING, FROM UNP INNER CIRCLES, INFO AS TO WHY J.R. HAD MADE COUP CHARGES AND NATURE OF HIS EVIDENCE. THIS REQUEST WAS TURNED ASIDE.
VAN HOLLEN

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NNN

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